Table 2-10
Special-status Species at San Luis Reservoir State Recreation Area

SPECIES	HABITAT	POTENTIAL FOR OCCURRENCE	CNPS	DFG	USFWS
INVERTEBRATES					
Valley Elderberry Longhorn Beetle *Desmocerus californicus dimorphus*	Elderberry shrubs	Status unknown but may be present. No elderberry shrubs found during 2002 field surveys.	--	--	FT
FISHES					
San Joaquin Roach *Lavinia symmetricus*	Small, warm intermittent streams	Status unknown but not expected due to the absence of suitable habitat.	--	CSC	--
AMPHIBIANS AND REPTILES					
California Tiger Salamander *Ambystoma californiense*	Vernal pools and stock ponds in grasslands	Status unknown but may be present. Undocumented reports from Basalt Use Area. Potential breeding habitat also present near the campground and may be present elsewhere in the project area.	--	CSC	FC
Western Spadefoot *Scaphiopus hammondii*	Vernal pools and other seasonal ponds	Status unknown but may be present.	--	CSC	--
California Red-legged Frog *Rana aurora draytonii*	Stock ponds and other natural and artificial permanent aquatic habitats	Status unknown but may be present. Not expected to breed in the project area due to the absence of stock ponds and other permanent water free of predatory fish. Additional surveys needed to confirm breeding status.	--	CSC	FT
Foothill Yellow-legged Frog *Rana boylei*	Generally restricted to shallow, flowing streams with some cobble-sized substrate	Not expected due to the absence of suitable habitat. Reported to the CNDDB as occurring upstream from Los Banos Reservoir in Los Banos Creek.	--	CSC	--
Western Pond Turtle *Clemmys marmorata*	Ponds, marshes, streams, and irrigation ditches	Status unknown but expected to occur. Reported to the CNDDB from Los Banos Reservoir and detention dam in 1985. O'Neill Forebay also appears to be suitable habitat.	--	CSC	--
Blunt-nosed Leopard Lizard *Gambelia sila*	Sparsely vegetated plains, alkali flats, low foothills, washes, and arroyos	Not expected. Current range is restricted to areas farther south. The CNDDB includes a 1931 occurrence from the vicinity of the San Luis Dam.	--	CE, FP	FE
San Joaquin Whipsnake *Masticophis flagellum ruddocki*	grasslands	Status unknown but expected to occur. The CNDDB includes numerous occurrences from the Los Banos Valley.	--	CSC	--

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Special-status Species at San Luis Reservoir State Recreation Area

SPECIES	HABITAT	POTENTIAL FOR OCCURRENCE	CNPS	DFG	USFWS
BIRDS					
Swainson's Hawk *Buteo swainsoni*	Grasslands, riparian woodland, and agricultural fields	Known to occur at project area (observed during 2003 field surveys). Known to nest in the area including recent CNDDB records from O'Neill Forebay Wildlife Area (2001) and Los Banos Valley (1985)	--	CT	--
Golden Eagle *Aquila chrysaetos*	Grasslands, open woodlands	Status unknown but expected to occur Suitable nesting habitat present.	--	CSC	--
Bald Eagle *Haliaeetus leucocephalus*	Usually found in grasslands and open woodlands near large bodies of water	May winter in small numbers at Los Banos Reservoir, San Luis Reservoir, and O'Neill Forebay. Not expected to nest in the project area.	--	CE	PD
Prairie Falcon *Falco mexicanus*	Grasslands and other open habitats with nearby cliff for nesting sites	Known to occur at Los Banos Reservoir (observed during 2002 field surveys). Suitable nesting located on cliff upstream and above Los Banos Reservoir.	--	CSC	--
Northern Harrier *Circus cyaneus*	Grasslands, marshes, and agricultural fields	Observed during 2002 field surveys. Nesting status not determined but suitable nesting habitat is present.	--	CSC	--
Ferruginous Hawk *Buteo regalis*	Grasslands and agricultural fields	Status unknown but likely a regular winter visitor.	--	CSC	--
Mountain Plover *Charadrius montanus*	Grasslands and agricultural fields on flat terrain	Status unknown but may be an uncommon winter visitor	--	CSC	PT
Burrowing Owl *Athene cunicularia*	Grasslands and agricultural fields	Status unknown but likely to occur in small numbers during winter and the nesting season.	--	CSC	--
California Horned Lark *Eremophila alpestris actia*	Grasslands and agricultural fields	Observed during 2002 surveys. Nesting status unknown but suitable habitat is present.	--	CSC	--
Loggerhead Shrike *Lanius ludovicianus*	Grasslands and agricultural fields	Observed during 2002 surveys. Nesting status unknown but suitable habitat is present	--	CSC	--
Tricolored Blackbird *Agelaius tricolor*	Freshwater marsh, riparian habitat, and agricultural fields	Known to nest and forage at project area (observed during 2003 field surveys). Emergent marsh habitat at Los Banos Reservoir may be suitable nesting habitat. Known to nest at O'Neill Forebay Wildlife Area.	--	CSC	--

Table 2-10
Special-status Species at San Luis Reservoir State Recreation Area

SPECIES	HABITAT	POTENTIAL FOR OCCURRENCE	CNPS	DFG	USFWS
MAMMALS					
San Joaquin Kit Fox *Vulpes macrotis mutica*	Grasslands and open scrub	Know to occur in small numbers. Few documented occurrences in recent years suggest an unstable and possibly declining population.	--	CE	FE

California Native Plant Society (CNPS)

California Department of Fish and Game (DFG)
CE - State-listed, Endangered
CT - State-listed, Threatened
CSC - California Species of Special Concern
FP - Fully Protected

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS)
FE - Federal Endangered
FT - Federal Threatened
FC - Federal Candidate
PT - Proposed for listing as Threatened
PD – Proposed for delisting

Source: CNDDB 2002; EDAW 2002

The current status of the kit fox in the project area is not known. However, kit foxes were documented in the vicinity of the unit on numerous occasions during the 1990s. Therefore, it is presumed that small numbers of kit foxes are likely present, at least for short durations, in the project area. There are several factors contributing to the uncertainty of the status of the kit fox in the unit. Kit foxes are nocturnal and seldom detected without intensive surveys; focused kit fox surveys have not been conducted at the project area. Also, most recent kit fox detections have been limited to single individuals identified during spotlighting surveys or by other survey methods (e.g., track stations). No natal (i.e., breeding) dens have been documented in the unit. Therefore, it is not known if a reproducing kit fox population exists on the unit or if their presence is limited to individuals occasionally using the unit as a travel corridor.

In 1998, USFWS issued a recovery plan for the kit fox and other upland species of the San Joaquin Valley. The USFWS defines recovery as the process by which the decline of an endangered or threatened species is arrested or reversed and threats to its survival are neutralized, so that its long-term survival in nature can be ensured (USFWS 1998). Recovery plans delineate, justify, and schedule the research and management actions necessary to support recovery of a species. The recovery plan includes development of a conservation strategy so that various agencies could work collectively to positively impact declining populations of the kit fox and other threatened or endangered species in the valley.

A recovery action specified by USFWS that is particularly applicable to the project area is to "protect existing kit fox habitat in the northern, northwestern, and northwestern segments of their geographic range and existing connections between habitat in those areas and habitat farther south." The USFWS considers the Santa Nella area including portions of the unit as crucial to the continued existence of the San Joaquin kit fox because this area has provided a narrow corridor connecting the northern and southern kit populations (KFPACT 2002). The Kit Fox Planning and Conservation Team (KFPACT), which consists primarily of biologists representing state and federal agencies, has recently identified the range of the kit fox in this region. In the vicinity of the project area, the kit fox range is confined between San Luis Reservoir on the west, and agricultural lands and wetlands to the east. Future urban development in the vicinity of Santa Nella threatens to increase fragmentation in this region and